

# Alberta School Council's Association Engage 2013 Conference Report

---

*Submitted by Chris Nelson*

**Jeff Johnson - Minister of Education**

**April 26, 2013**

- New Education Act to be implemented September 2015
- Regulations to the new act required 4 MLA's and one other.
- Want to leave schools better for the next generation of kids. Minister Johnson would like to extend his gratitude to council members for all the work done and input given.
- Alberta has the strongest legislation in Canada with respect to parent's voices.
- 50/62 School Boards support.
- Gov't wants to build 50 new schools and renovate 70 more this coming year. Premier Redford's announcement will be coming next week.
- Difficult budget choices this year... economy is a long term problem so had to get budget in line.
- 3% increase in Education budget. Post-secondary drastically cut. 2% more children in school this year with the same level of funding per child.
- Minister reduced his budget by 15%.
- Retained same per pupil rate and increased class size initiatives.

Direction they are going:

Minister Johnson attended the APEC meeting in Korea this year where 21 countries bordering the Pacific Ocean attended, most heads of state. Once every 4 years Education Ministers get together. Canada is the only country which does not have a National head so one Provincial Education Minister gets chosen. Alberta was chosen to attend. 5 countries and 1 Province were designated as the best and all others were to strive to attain their top performing level. The province was ALBERTA!! Criteria included:

1. Stable, predictable government which included a stable educational program
2. No nonsense approach to education when tough choices needed to be made, they were.

Inspiring Educational Program has been developed the last 4 years. Indicates where education in Alberta is heading. With 5 years of labour peace, no one was distracted with other issues and were allowed to focus on "What does an educated student look like in the 21st century?" Are we on track? What are the changes we need to make to get there?

Three "E's" @ APEC:

1. Engaged Thinker - critical thinking skills
2. Ethical Citizen - contributes to society
3. Entrepreneurial Spirit - want kids to take risks, be independent, forward thinking, have character.

17% of kids go onto University. Need to not focus on the system, but to instead focus on the student. Are going to get out of the school business and into the education business. Going beyond K-12, fostering relationships within the community.

Shift in technology from regurgitating content to competences. Diversity in the classroom is getting wider, we need to embrace and help kid's master skills. Implications on what we teach and how kids progress through the system.

3 "E's" need to be instilled into education. Implementing Inspiring Education.

- Dual credits - taking credits which count towards both high school graduation as well as entry level post-secondary education.

- Parent voice is incredibly important to where we are going in the future.

- Not going to build buildings for one purpose only. Will make them "wrap around" buildings serving various functions...library, care clinics, community events, etc. Olds community built high school on college campus. MD, school board and college campus partnered for dual credits courses.

- Funding for distance learning and work experience programs were funded "at par" with school courses. Have made change to decrease this funding as it does not cost as much to operate as regular school programs.

## **Dual Credit Opportunities**

This session shared information on what dual credit is and what schools are currently using it and opportunities that are available in Alberta schools.

Dual credit is where high school students participate in apprenticeship training or post-secondary, college or university courses earning both high school and post-secondary credits for the same course. Post-secondary institutions exempt students from courses (often at the first-year level) in recognition of coursework completed in high school.

The question was raised: What do our kids need as skills in the next 20 years? Joe Shelast is curriculum manager with Citizen and Career Pathways Branch of Alberta Education. Alberta Ed is going toward being less focused on the school, content, technology with less printed materials and towards more focus on the education received, the learner and competency along with being more digitally based. AB Ed is looking to develop the entrepreneurial spirit, critical thinking, and a creative life-long learner. They want to bring out the leadership and innovative side of students.

Dual credits have been around in B.C., Manitoba and Ontario as well as the USA for many years. The first programs to be piloted were pharmacy technician and print media production, but have expanded to include courses such as welding, machining, carpentry, technician basics, equine sciences, fashion marketing, landscape construction, hairstyling trade, etc. Chinook Edge School

Division and Olds College as well as the municipality have joined forces to put dual credits to work on their campus.

The apprenticeship model is hours based for grading yet the flexibility model is competency based (other than the work experience portion). A challenging first year student needs 70% to be recognized by the apprenticeship board although only 50% to obtain school credit.

Edmonton Public is working with a new health care aid program. Calgary Board of Education created a new cooking program as well as doing welding, designing and printing. Lakeland College is piloting an interior design as well as a fire fighting program.

Grade 11 and 12 students are eligible for dual credits.

Each jurisdiction has its own needs and services. Cannot put automotive shops in all schools as it is too expensive. The Superintendent and President of the College usually draw up an MOU (memorandum of understanding) but programs need to be valued and brought back to the school board by the parents.

Partnerships are crucial. Business and industry contacts are useful for their expertise.

High school can only offer the first year of an apprenticeship.

St. Albert Catholic partnered with MacEwan University beforehand and noted Math 30-1 or 30-2 as well as English 30-1 were needed by the University for the courses Into to Canadian Business, Into to Canadian Management, as well as Business Law allowing students the knowledge of high school courses needed before taking these dual courses.

Division uses CEU funding. Also depends on partnerships as the partners can sometimes get other funding for the dual courses. Cannot charge tuition for dual courses but can charge material fees. Students are actually admitted to the College or Educational facility and are not charged tuition fees to attend the Post-Secondary institution.

Credentialed Pathways - over 40 pathways on the website. A selection of courses to give students the opportunity to explore and acquire the attitudes, skills and knowledge for future careers relevant to their interests. Can work towards goals that may include University, College, apprenticeship training or directly into the work force.

Dual credit has been offered in Canada and the USA over the past 30 years. Alberta in pockets over the last 5 or 6 years. Five new trades are being implemented in September: millwright, plumbing, heavy equipment, electrician, machinist. 3400 level courses must be taught by a journeyman. There is a desire to create 10-15 more pathways soon.

Email [Joe.Shelast@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Joe.Shelast@gov.ab.ca)

1-780-643-6419

## Careers-The Next Generation

Careers in a company developed as a valued resource for parents supporting their children in career goals. This session included information about the RAP program as well as upcoming trends in the workforce, future jobs, what will be in demand, and what education will be required.

Careers brings together strong, vibrant communities where youth develop their paths to career success. Careers believes if you train students from high school and give them a reason to stay in the immunity, they become a long term employee within the community.

Their core business is the RAP program - Registered Apprenticeship Program

Careers Track Record of Success for 2012:

- 39,000 students in workshop
- 510 schools
- 288 communities
- 1871 students in workplace
- 1180 employers involved

Employers give Careers a prerequisite of what they need in an employee. Careers takes this form back to the school so that students know what is needed and expected from them. Careers must be asked by the school to become involved with the students. Students can enter any time in their high school years. Once the student comes up with what they want, Careers finds an internship where students can apprentice. The credit is based upon the hours they work. Work experience is \$122/credit, RAP is \$187/credit.

Electrician, millwright, welder, machinist, and plumber are a few of the positions available in which students can get credits toward their first year apprenticeship. Realistically a student can be a journeyman by the time they are 21 years of age.

Careers Target for 2013:

- 42,000 students
- 520 schools
- 305 communities
- 2000 student internships in the workplace
- 1250 employers involved

Schools do the worksite inspection before student becomes employed. An inspection by the school takes place every 25 hours. WCB is covered by AB Ed for the high school student.

Employers are saying:

"Employable skills" are critical

Many students new to the industry need a "cookbook" to be successful (step by step instructions)

Young people need an increased understanding of what the options are.

It is hard to fit a round peg in a round hole when the peg does not know the hole exists

Employees want employability skills development

In order to get a job and keep it, there are critical fundamental skills, personal management skills and teamwork skills needed.

Employers Want A Balance Of The Following:

- Fundamental Skills:
- Communicate
- Manage info
- Think and solve problems
- Use of numbers

Personal Management Skills:

- Demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours
- Be responsible
- Work safety
- Be adaptable
- Learn continuously

Teamwork Skills:

- Participate in projects and tasks
- Work with others

Kids are not afraid to challenge adults, some look at this as being disrespectful but they are a different generation and have grown up being exposed to different parenting techniques.

#1 Forecasted Opportunity in Alberta - Oil and Gas Drilling Supervisor (44% growth in number of employees 2006-2012) annual salary \$74,880

National Forecasted Opportunities:

Head Nurse & Health Care Manager - 58% annual salary \$74,880

Petroleum Engineer - 75% annual salary \$93,517

Electrical & Telecommunication Contractor - 87% annual salary \$72,800

School Principal & Administrator - 9% annual salary \$90,002

Provincial Forecasted Opportunities:

Job Type:	# Employed	Est. Ann. Increase	% AB Economy	Ant. New Jobs
1. Construction	206,500	4.0%	7.9%	44,700
2. Health care & Social Assistance	219,300	2.5%	5.2%	28,900
3. Scientific	150,900	2.7%	5.3%	21,200
-accountant				
-architect				
-civil engineer				
-lawyer				

4. Retail Trade	231,500	1.7%	5.2%	20,600
-cashier				
-optician				
-retail & store managers				

Salary for above jobs:

1. \$63,000-\$109,000
2. \$62,000-\$265,000
3. \$49,000-\$99,000
4. \$24,000-\$94,000

Carpenters, electricians, roofers and pipe fitters will all be in demand.  
#1 worst rated future occupation will be pulp mill worker.

On ALIS site under "Emerging Occupations" : (only a few listed below) [alis.gov.ab.ca](http://alis.gov.ab.ca)

- Cytotechnologist - person who checks tissue samples
- Data Miner - mine data by computer (i.e. homeland security - terrorists)
- Nano Engineer
- Landfill Gas Plant Operator

Many students are doing exploration after establishment... continuing to learn once they are in an occupation as new job descriptions are developing very quickly. Teachers, parents and peers are most influential people to a student. Let students engage, explore and encourage the entrepreneurial spirit.

Curriculum Redesign and Inspiring Education:

Alberta has a world class education system today, but will it meet the needs of students in the years to come? Curriculum redesign is one of 6 priority initiatives arising from and aligned with Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans.

Future provincial curriculum will be designed to foster a strong foundation of literacy and numeracy, and focus on the development of the cross-curricular competences students will need to thrive in a dynamic, global economy and society.

Joan Engle and Paul Lamoureux with Alberta Education's Education Program Standards and Assessment began by saying there are three parts to Curriculum:

1. Program of Studies
2. Learning & Teaching Resources
3. Assessment

Evolving from the Inspiring Education discussion, policy shifts are moving towards an engaged student and ethical citizen with an entrepreneurial spirit. Alberta has a very highly regarded educational system and we are now headed toward greater depth within our program.

We are shifting away from the rote memorization of facts to look at content, problem solving, interaction in the subject areas easily brought up by mobile devices. Students can Google info in seconds when needed. It is a different step to get knowledge - they must internalize and make connections. Alta Ed is constructing redesign across the curriculum rather than focusing on one subject area with development and implementation taking place on a 10 year cycle.

LESS:

- System focused
- Content focused
- Prescriptive curriculum with limited flexibility
- Primarily focused on summative assessment
- Print based
- Ministry-led development
- Sequential development

And MORE focused on:

- Student focused
- Focus on competences
- Opportunities for local decision making & greater depth of study
- Balance among formative and summative assessments
- Digitally based
- Collaborative & co-development models
- Synchronous development

Video available on the website soon (although we got to watch it ☺)

[www.education.ab.ca/math](http://www.education.ab.ca/math) New math problem solving program.

There are almost 500 locally developed courses performed over 2000 times in Alberta which will be becoming part of the curriculum redesign in AB Ed programs.

The provincial achievement exam assessments are being revamped. Looking at getting achievement exams and diploma exams online. Replacing grade 3 PAT with literacy and numeracy as the first step to revamping. Grade 6 and 9 will evolve after this. Much more comprehensive approach across all curriculums. \*\*\*\*noted page 26 in Inspiring Education Report\*\*\*\*

We now know so much more about the internal mapping of the brain which allows us to better understand students learning styles. Not linking assessment to grades or ages, but celebrating the individual student is crucial. Also looking at when provincial testing should be done i.e. beginning of the year?

New Education Act to be implemented in Sept 2015. Curriculum Redesign website not yet available. Coming soon.

## **School Council Basics**

This session was about understanding the legislated role of school councils including which topics/areas are open for discussion, which require caution and what decisions are within the authority of a school council which helps to prevent tension and dysfunction within the school council and the school community. There was discussion on how to identify and frame a "personal issue" from a school council perspective and how to broach sensitive topics. The ASCA contract instructor was Mary Marson-Troicuk.

The School Council Purpose, by definition, is "A means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning." It is a group of people who work together to advise the principal and the board respecting matters relating to the school. This is our key role...not fundraising.

The official name is "School Council" not Parent Council. This name was legislated in 1995. It has a legislated purpose. The membership consists of a principal, teacher, student (if senior high) and parents. The parents of students enrolled in the school must be the majority! You may have others as members as well.

As long as we are an ASCA member we are able to take a workshop at no cost to us. Contact Shawna or Wendy in Edmonton and they can match a workshop to our specific need. They have a 1-800 number. They also have an online, full edition Alta School Council Resource Manual if needed. Mary talked about a "Survey Monkey" online which allows you to send out a survey with your own questions online free of charge.

The chairperson must prepare and provide to the board by Sept 30 of each year a report summarizing the activities of the previous year. They must include a financial report of the council handles money. Does not need to be audited. Only has to include an opening balance, deposits or withdrawals and a closing balance. School councils can hold money used in operations. Of course, casino money is exempt from this. Must retain minutes for 7 years.

Should always review the agenda with the principal out of courtesy. It is not our responsibility to take on individual student issues. When issues become heated, reframe the issues and/or bring in a specialist to help inform the parents.

Lots of school councils, especially large ones in cities, never see their trustees or even know their names. We are very lucky to have such a personal connection with our trustees who make it a priority to attend our meetings!!!